

# Volunteering to Teach Japanese through Volleyball at Roma

## Mitchell Secondary School, Adelaide

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### **Roma Mitchell Secondary College**

Roma Mitchell Secondary College is a large public high school in the northern suburbs of Adelaide offering three specialisations within the one Campus: a Girls' school, a Co-educational school and a Special education school. It has an enrolment of 1300 students. The school has a strong focus on leadership, academic excellence and equity and offers a broad curriculum as well as a specialist sports program, a gifted and talented program, and vocational education and training. The school offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme and is currently in the candidacy stage for the IB Diploma Programme. The languages offered within the mainstream program include German, Italian and Japanese whilst students may elect to undertake additional languages such as Arabic, Persian and Hindi via the School of Languages.

### **Rationale for this Exchange**

The rationale for this exchange was twofold; it was anticipated that there would be benefits for both the students at Roma Mitchell Secondary College and the volunteer assistant Japanese teacher. It was hoped that the students' learning of Japanese would be facilitated through the synthesis of physical movement and language (see Asher, 1977, below). Repeated exposure to the Japanese language in a meaningful and authentic context requiring a physical response would assist with the retention of the language in the students' memory. The Japanese volunteer, Kenta Fujikawa, was training to be a teacher of English in Japan. Currently, Japanese university students are encouraged to participate in study or internship abroad. Kirchhoff (2015) explains that this is due to the need to foster graduates who can relate to people of other cultures, and represent Japan. This project was an opportunity to put this into practice. It was hoped that Kenta would develop

intercultural communicative skills, and English-language skills, through participation in an Australian school. Kenta was training in Japan to be an English teacher, but he is also an athlete, so he used these skills in the teaching of Japanese in Australia. He taught Japanese, Physical Education, and coached volleyball and beach volleyball teams.

### **Learning in Context**

Language learning is facilitated in an authentic context. Vocabulary for playing sport, such as ‘Throw the ball’, ‘Pass the ball to her’, and ‘Catch the ball’ are better taught in the context of such actions rather than from a textbook. Before Kenta departed for Australia, his English teacher demonstrated how to teach a foreign language in such a context. Kenta’s second language is English, and although he is familiar with these expressions, his teacher taught him how to embed them in an authentic context. Then the teacher had Kenta demonstrate his understanding of this process by having him teach her ball skills, with a real ball, in Japanese.

### **Bi- and Multi-modal Input**

Cheetham (2017) provides an extensive review of studies of neuroscience, psychology and applied linguistics which highlights the advantages of bi- and multi-modal input. Language learning is enhanced by simultaneously providing various modes of input, such as observing faces and gesture while listening, observing illustrations while listening, reading-while-listening, and watching same-language titles in a video (p. 1). Describing the observation of the face while listening, Van Wassenhove (2013) explains: “the kinematics of the face articulating speech can robustly influence the processing and comprehension of auditory speech” (p.1). One of the purposes of the current project was to have Kenta provide a source of bi-modal input for the students, so that the students could observe him speaking Japanese, and observe his movements while watching him speak.

### **Physical Movement to Facilitate Learning**

Not only is observation of movement while listening to a foreign language helpful; the performance of physical movement can also be exploited in the classroom in order to facilitate learning outcomes. Movement provides increased

oxygen to the brain, and refocuses attention; physical activities increase oxygen in the bloodstream, and this is connected to concentration and memory (Tokuhamma-Espinosa, 2010, p. 94). Not only is movement beneficial to learning, some argue that movement has a special role in the teaching and learning of a foreign language.

### **Total Physical Response**

The approach chosen to synthesize the teaching and learning of physical education and Japanese was James Asher's (1977) Total Physical Response, in which a foreign language is taught through actions:

When noises coming from someone's mouth are followed by a body movement, the learner is able immediately to decipher the meaning of the noise at many levels of awareness including phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics (p. 130).

Asher (1977) explains that the perceived superiority of language learning by children over adults is not the case with language-body learning; in the latter the performance of the adults matches that of the children. Asher labels the traditional classroom where adults learn a foreign language as an "impoverished context of learning" (pp. 1-32), and contrasts this with the context in which body movements are synchronized with the language.

### **Comprehension before Production**

Asher (1977, pp. 2-10) explains that the purpose of this technique is to have the student demonstrate their understanding through their physical response. This is because listening comprehension is the foundation of the other skills. Students are not forced to speak, but rather begin speaking when they are ready.

### **Feedback from the Current Project**

Below are some photographs of Kenta in his role as volunteer assistant teacher at Roma Mitchell Secondary College. These demonstrate his teaching of Japanese in the classroom, coaching of beach volleyball, and participation in a race on Sport's Day. There is also a photo of the students' card to him, spontaneously expressing their appreciation. This is followed by his responses to a questionnaire

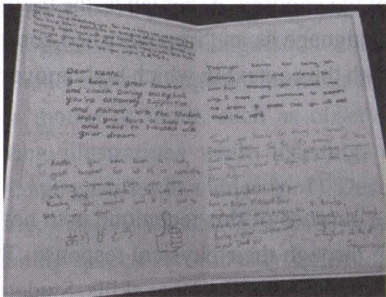
in Japanese, which has been translated into English. A selection of further comments by Kenta in English and Japanese appears in the appendix.



Beach Volleyball



Track & field – courtesy of RMSC



Card for Kenta



Kenta FUJIKAWA

**Questionnaire**

アンケート

1. Did your English improve during your stay in Australia? Please explain.

1. オーストラリア滞在中にあなたの英語力は向上しましたか？ 説明してください。

→主に英語のコミュニケーションスキルが向上した。渡航以前より、日常会話で困ることがなくなっていた。相手に自分の意図を知っている情報や表現を用いて伝えることができるようになった。Mainly, my communicative proficiency improved. Compared to when I previously went abroad, I had less trouble in everyday conversation. I was able to express myself to others using the information and expressions I knew.

2. Did you further your intercultural understanding during your stay in Australia?  
If so, how?

2. オーストラリア滞在中にあなたの文化間理解は進みましたか？ もしそうなら、どのように進んだか教えてください。

→オーストラリア滞在中に文化間理解はかなり進んだ。自分はオーストラリアに対しての予備知識が少なかったことも要因として考えられるが、一番の原因はオーストラリアに住む人々とのコミュニケーションの中で醸成されていったものだと思う。また、オーストラリアが他文化国家であることに日本との大きなギャップを覚えた。一人一人がお互いの異なるバックグラウンドを認め合っている環境、関係性が興味深かった。I made progress in my intercultural understanding while staying in Australia. I didn't know what to expect in Australia, but this understanding was fostered by communicating with people living in Australia. I noticed a big gap between multiculturalism in Australia and Japan. I was profoundly interested in the environment in which individuals recognized the differences in each other's backgrounds.

3. How did your experience of the homestay influence your learning of English?

3. ホームステイの経験があなたの英語学習にどのような影響を与えましたか？

→ホームステイ先でホストファミリーと衣食住を共にしたことによって、心理的安全性が担保され、よりフランクな表現やコミュニケーションが取れた。オーストラリアならではの文化体験を通して、英語が果たす役割も再認識した。During the homestay I learnt about customs for food and clothing; I felt safe and secure, and was able to communicate frankly. I recognized the role English played during my homestay through the cultural experience in Australia.

4. How did the experience of working in an Australian high school influence your learning of English? Did you learn English from speaking to the staff? Did you learn English from speaking to the children?

4. オーストラリアの高校で働いた経験があなたの英語学習にどのような影響を与えました

か？ スタッフに対して(英語で)話したことで英語を学びましたか？ 子どもたちに(英語で)話したことで英語を学びましたか？

→オーストラリアの高校で働いた経験によって、実践的な英語を使うことができ、より教育に使えるような英語を身につけたいというモチベーションが上がった。教員と英語でコミュニケーションをとることによって、オーストラリアの教育的事情を知ることができた。そのことによって、オーストラリアと日本の教育の間にギャップが生じていることが分かり興味深く思った。子供達に英語で話したことによって、第二言語話者の用いる英語の多様性を実感することができた。子供達が用いている英語は多岐にわたっていたことで、多文化理解につながり、もっと英語文化を理解したいと思った。Through the experience of studying at an Australian high school, I was able to actually use English, and this increased my motivation to use the kind of English which is used in an educational setting. Through speaking English with the teachers, I was able to learn about the facts of Australian education. I became very interested as I understood the differences between Australian and Japanese education. Speaking to the children in English, I got to know the diversity of English actually being spoken by people who use it as their first and second languages. The children spoke various kinds of English and I could understand the cultural differences. I wanted to learn more about the culture of the English language.

5. Was the learning of English in Australia easier or more difficult than you had anticipated? Please explain.

5. オーストラリアで英語を学ぶことは予想していたより簡単でしたか、それとも難しかったですか？ 説明してください。

→オーストラリアで英語を学ぶことは予想していたより簡単であった。なぜなら、私が勤務したのは教育機関だったからだ。一人一人が教育者として正しい英語を用いていたことより、私の英語学習も平易であった。Learning English in Australia was easier than I had thought it would be, because I was working in an educational institution. Each of the teachers taught me correct English, so it was easy to study English.

6. Do you think that the methodology of teaching using Total Physical Response (TPR) in Japanese helped the Australian children learn Japanese? Did the children understand you when you gave them explanations in Japanese?

6. TPR を日本語で教えるという方法論は、オーストラリアの子どもたちが日本語を学ぶのに役立ったと思いますか？ 彼らに日本語で説明をしたとき、子どもたちはあなたの言った

ことを理解しましたか？

→役立っていたと思う。なぜなら身体を動かして言語習得することは、耳で聞くという行為に比べて、コミュニケーションの行為により強い印象を与える。五感をいくつか同時に使うことで、より効果的に言語を習得できるように感じた。頭だけでなく、身体で覚えていくのだと感じた。I think it was useful, because using physical movement, compared to just listening, leaves a stronger impression in the act of communication. I felt that using the five senses simultaneously was a more effective way of acquiring a language. I felt that they could remember it not only with their head, but also with their body.

7. Do you think that this methodology helped the children learn Japanese? Please explain.

7. この方法論は、オーストラリアの子どもたちが日本語を理解する手助けになったと思いますか？

→TPR はオーストラリアの子どもたちが日本語を理解する手助けになったと思う。理由として、言語習得するという障壁が下がったからだ。身体を使って言語を学ぶことによって、机に座って学ぶという構えがなくなっているからだ。I think TPR helped the Australian children learn Japanese, because the barrier to learning another language was lowered. This is because learning another language through actions took away the sense that they were learning by sitting at a desk.

8. Do you think that this methodology helped the children develop intercultural understanding? Please explain.

8. この方法論は、オーストラリアの子どもたちの文化間理解を向上させるのに役立ったと思いますか？ 説明してください。

→役立ったと思った。なぜなら、日本語という存在への障壁が TPR によって下がっているからだ。よって文化間理解をする際にも、日本への理解が容易に感じたからと推測している。I think it was useful. This is because the barrier of thinking of Japanese as another language was lowered. I guess when understanding another culture, they felt it was easy to understand Japan.

9. You recently participated in teaching practice in a Japanese school. What differences did you notice between the teaching style in the Japanese school and

the teaching style in the Australian school?

9. あなたは最近日本の学校で教える活動に参加しましたが、日本の学校の教え方とオーストラリアの学校で教えるやり方で違いがありましたか？

→日本の教授法と、オーストラリアの教授法では違いがあった。オーストラリアの教育では、日本の教育と比べて生徒の自主性を重んじていた。オーストラリアでは personal time という個人で実行したいものに対する時間があるのだ。生徒一人一人が志に向かって進んでいつているのだ。これは非常に興味深く感じた。また生徒へのフックの掛け方に工夫を凝らしていたように感じた。オーストラリアでは一つのクラスの時間が、日本の授業の 1.5 倍もある。だからこそ、生徒が1時間半の中で集中力を切らさないように教師は工夫しているのだ。I sensed a difference between the teaching styles in the Japanese and Australian schools. In Australia you have your own time for doing what you want as an individual. The students are encouraged to pursue their own interests. I felt this was really interesting. Also, I realized that teachers also made efforts to get students involved in activities. In Australia the lessons are 1.5 times as long as in Japan. Therefore, the teacher uses their ingenuity so that the students do not lose concentration over one and a half hours.

10. What were the positive experiences teaching in an Australian school?

10. オーストラリアの学校で教える際に好ましく感じた経験はありましたか？

→生徒同士、教師同士がお互いの違いを認め合っている環境があったこと。具体的には、お互いのバックグラウンドが異なる環境でも、相互にリスペクトしあっていたのだ。一人一人が自立し違いを認め合う関係があり、日本でも取り入れたいと思った。日本の人々も皆が、お互いの違いを個性として認め合える国にしていきたいと決意した。It was an environment in which the teachers and the students could acknowledge each other's differences. Even in an environment in which their backgrounds differed, they respected each other. They had a relationship in which they were independent, and they acknowledged each other's differences. I thought we should do this in Japan too. I determined that all of us too in Japan should acknowledge each other's differences and individuality.

11. What advice would you give to future students who volunteer to teach in an Australian school?

11. 将来オーストラリアの学校でボランティアティーチングをする学生たちに対してアドバイスがあれば教えて下さい。



→私が伝えたいことは、二つです。一つ目が“準備”です。準備こそが最大の自信となり、チャレンジできる自分になれる第一歩だと思っています。準備をせずに自信がなければ、生徒とコミュニケーションをとることも、同僚の教員にも積極的に声をかけることも難しいと思います。具体的な準備として英語の勉強はもちろんです。文化の違い、日本とオーストラリアでの教育体制の違い、働き方の違いなどなど。派遣後に最大限パフォーマンスを発揮することが大切です。それが今後の皆さんの人生に大きく影響を与えると思います。常に渡航後のイメージをして準備をすることが大切だと思います。二つ目が自分の可能性を信じて、チャレンジしていくことです。皆さんは日本のアンバサダーとして派遣されます。受け入れ先の学校では皆さんの存在が“日本人・徳島大学”として認識されます。だからこそ、自覚と誇りを持って頑張ってください。そのためには自分の可能性を信じて、自分なりに目標を決めてチャレンジしていくことをしていったほうがいいです。結果を変えるのはあなた次第です。頑張ってください。応援しています。There are two things I would like to say. The first is “preparation”. It is preparation that gives us the most confidence and is the first step towards being able to take on a challenge. If you don't prepare and you don't have confidence, I think it is difficult to communicate with the students, and to positively address your teacher colleagues. Of course, the first kind of preparation is to study English. Also, the cultural differences, the differences in the Japanese and the Australian education systems, and the differences in the work. After you get there it's important to demonstrate your best performance. I think that will have a big influence on your future. It's important to always imagine what to expect after arrival. The second one is to believe in your potential, and to challenge yourself. You will be sent as an ambassador of Japan. The people at the school will look at you as a Japanese, and someone from Tokushima University. Therefore, do your best to be self-aware and proud of yourself. Therefore, I want you to believe in your own potential, decide on your objective, and challenge yourself. Changing the result depends on you. Do your best. I support you.

## Conclusion

The twofold objectives in this project appear to have been achieved. Firstly, Kenta was able to provide a source of live bi-modal input of the Japanese language through movement. He was able to share his native language skills, his culture, and his volleyball skills, in an integrated way, with the students. Secondly, as an intern, he was able to learn about the Australian education system, and multiculturalism and diversity in Australia. Interactions with the staff and

homestay family supported the development of his English skills. As for the students, they were able to learn Japanese in the context of Physical Education. Accordingly, this project provided a learning opportunity for both the students, and for Kenta himself.

**Appendix:** Additional comments by Kenta in English and Japanese

Every day was exciting and there were a lot of new discoveries and things to notice. After three weeks of dispatch, I have four things to tell at this point. The first is the importance of in-service training and the open-minded attitude of public education institutions. The most I felt this was at the teacher meeting after school on Wednesday. The subject of the day was how the professor copes with gender diversity in inter-student and school education. The school invited a lecturer from another institution, did group work, etc. through a presentation by the lecturer, and the teacher himself discussed the question without a solution. In this way, I felt that it would be even more necessary in the future to be able to flexibly accept and cooperate with the attitude of the teachers themselves to continue learning and the good things of the private sector as well. The second is to create an environment where students can learn and work voluntarily. I was surprised that many students always raised their hands spontaneously and asked questions. Also, while communicating with Japanese language students, many students felt that learning Japanese was difficult, but they are interested in Japanese culture. “I want to go to Japan in the future!!!” There are so many students who said that. From this experience, I would like to devise ways of sparking interest when students learn something. Specifically, it means that learning is linked to the future. It also means that learning a language leads to an understanding of culture. The third is how teachers work and communicate. The teachers themselves also distinguish between being on and off-duty, and they are well refreshed and well balanced with their personal lives. Specifically, extra-curricular activities to get physical exercise with each other, and during break time to communicate with free food, biscuits and coffee. All were fresh to me. I thought that it was an attractive system because I was so passionate about myself that I could not see the surroundings or often carried problems alone. The fourth is mutual respect among students with multicultural environments and backgrounds. Students of different nationalities and backgrounds from around the world

gathered, and I felt the importance of acting as a community. Understanding and respecting each other's backgrounds is quite difficult in Japan. Japan is globalizing, but I still find it difficult to accept something different from people. Because I used to act differently from people, I was seen with strange eyes. Once again, I felt that it would be nice to be in a world where people can accept and respect things that are different from others. For the first time, I conducted classes for international students and conducted Japanese classes in English. I experienced a lot of things. I am still in the process of reflecting on my learning. We will continue to work hard to make these discoveries and experiences useful. I got closer to my dream, and I found new goals! I'm really thankful to you. I would like to express my sincere thanks.

毎日が刺激的で本当に新たな発見・気づきばかりでした。3週間の派遣期間を終え、私が現時点でお伝えしたいことは4つです。1つ目が、教師自身の学び続けることの大切さと公教育機関のオープンマインドな姿勢です。これを一番感じたのは、水曜日の放課後に行われる教師のmeetingです。この日の題材は、生徒間・学校教育におけるgenderのdiversityに対して教授がどう対応していくか、というものでした。他機関から講師を招き、講師によるプレゼンテーションを通してグループワークなどをして、教師自身も解の無い問いに対して議論を行うのだ。このように教師自身も学び続ける姿勢、民間の良いところも柔軟に受け入れ協働していくことが今後なお一層必要だと感じました。2つ目が、生徒が自発的に学び活動できる環境を作るということです。驚いたのが、常に多くの生徒が自発的に手を挙げ、質問をするということ。また、日本語クラスの生徒とコミュニケーションをとっていると、多くの生徒が日本語学習は難しく苦手意識はあるが、日本の文化に興味があるのだ。『将来日本に行きたい!!!』と答えてくれた生徒が非常に多いのだ。この経験から、生徒が何かを学ぶ時にhookのかけ方を工夫していきたいと思いました。具体的には学びが将来にリンクしている、という意味づけです。また、言語を学ぶことが文化を理解することに繋がるということです。3つ目が、教師の働き方・コミュニケーションのとりかたです。教師自身もオンとオフを分け、しっかりとリフレッシュし私生活とのバランスを上手くとって仕事をされているということです。具体的には放課後に先生同士で身体を動かすアクティビティをする。休憩時間にフリーのフルーツやビスケットやコーヒーなどのフリーの食べ物を用意してコミュニケーションをとっていること。どれも私にとっては新鮮でした。自分自身熱中し過ぎて周りが見えなくなったり、問題を一人で抱え込んでしまうことが多々あるので、魅力的なシステムだと思いました。4つ目が、多文化な環境やバックグラウンドを持つ生徒間での、相互のレスpektです。世界中から違う国籍や背景を持つ生徒が集まり、1つの共同体として活動することの大切さを感じました。互いのバックグラウンドを理解し尊重し合うことは、日

本ではなかなか難しいことだと思います。日本はグローバル化が進んでいますが、依然として【人と違うこと】が受け入れづらいと感じます。自分自身も人と違う行動をよくしていたので、よく変わった目で見られていました。【人と違うこと】を個性として受け入れ、尊重できる世の中になると良いと改めて感じました。初めてインターナショナルな生徒に授業をしたり、日本語の授業を英語でしたり、改めて第2言語習得の難しさを実習で行ったものと対照的な経験をするによって得ることができました。多くのことを経験させて頂き、学び、内省している最中です。これらの気付きや経験を有益なものにできるように、今後も努力し続けて参ります。夢に一步近づきました。そして新たな目標もできました！ 本当ありがとうございました。心からの感謝をお伝え致します。

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